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Daily Highlights

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THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council urges RENAMO to reconsider decision to withdraw from Mozambican elections; Secretary-General says parties must fully honour election commitments, noting international community's investment in democratic process.

+ Security Council extends UNAVEM II mandate until 8 December and restores Mission's strength to previous level; urges Angolan parties to immediately conclude peace agreement and establish effective cease-fire.

+ Chairman of Security Council mission to Somalia says factions must cooperate in phased and orderly withdrawal of UNOSOM II; continued support for country after March 1995 depends on renunciation of violence and genuine reconciliation effort.

+ Secretary-General concludes stay in France and begins first official visit to Romania; addresses joint session of Romanian Parliament.

+ UNPROFOR reports heavy fighting in Bihac area after major Bosnian Government offensive; says Bosnian Serbs might launch counter-attack.

+ Secretary-General's Special Adviser for Public Policy appeals to all States to establish national committees on United Nations fiftieth anniversary as soon as possible.

+ Human Rights Committee discusses draft general comment on impact of reservations on International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

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The Security Council today appealed to the President of the Mozambique National Resistence Movement (RENAMO), Afonso Dhlakama, to reconsider his decision to withdraw from the current elections. The RENAMO President took that action after alleging that there

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For information media—not an official record

were certain irregularities in the election process. In a message from its President, Sir David Hannay (United Kingdom), to Mr. Dhlakama, the Council noted that appropriate procedures were in place through the National Elections Commission whereby any concern RENAMO might have could be addressed.

The Council recalled that it had expressed satisfaction at the progress made by the parties towards implementation of the General Peace Agreement in a statement on 21 October. It had also expressed support for the elections, which held out the prospect of lasting peace, stability and democracy for the Mozambican people. The Council urged RENAMO not to put that opportunity in peril.

In a related development, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali stressed that the elections must go ahead as planned and that the parties must fully honour their commitments in that regard. He said he was looking forward to the satisfactory conclusion of the elections, in which the United Nations and the international community had invested so much.

Meanwhile, Special Representative Aldo Ajello was engaged in an intensive effort to resolve the situation, and was in contact with Mr. Dklakama. United Nations monitors reported large turnouts and no major irregularities at polling stations. RENAMO monitors were present at many stations, although some were said to have withdrawn later.

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The Security Council today extended the mandate of the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM II) until 8 December. Saying it was encouraged by the substantial progress made recently at the Lusaka peace talks, the Council urged the Angolan parties to immediately conclude an agreement and to establish an effective cease-fire. It took that action by unanimously adopting resolution 852 (1994).

In order to consolidate the implementation of the peace agreement in its initial and most critical stages, the Council restored UNAVEM II's strength to its previous level of 350 military observers and 126 police observers, with an appropriate support staff. Deployment of the additional personnel would take place when the Secretary-General reported that the parties had initialled a peace agreement and that a cease-fire was in place. The Council reaffirmed its readiness to promptly consider any recommendation by the Secretary-General for an expanded United Nations presence in Angola based on his assessment of the circumstances.

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The Council deplored the continuation of hostilities throughout Angola and reiterated its demand that both parties immediately cease all military operations. It also deplored the deterioration of the humanitarian situation there, and demanded

that the parties ensure the security of relief deliveries and the safety of humanitarian personnel.

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The Chairman of the seven-member Security Council mission to Somalia, Colin Keating, today said that continuation of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) beyond 31 March 1995 could not be justified because of the political impasse in the country. Speaking at a press conference in Mogadishu, he stressed that responsibility for the lack of political progress and the inadequate security situation rested squarely on the shoulders of the faction leaders. The Council had sent the mission to Somalia in order to send a clear message to them -- that the international community had said "enough".

The mission had spoken at length with Mr. Ali Mahdi Mohamed and General Mohamed Farah Aideed, and with their respective faction leaders, and had expressed disappointment at their failure to achieve reconciliation, Mr. Keating said. The resulting lack of civil authority and governmental structure had severely hampered United Nations efforts to aid Somalia. The Security Council now expected that the phased and orderly withdrawal of UNOSOM II personnel would receive the cooperation of the factions.

The Council would soon have to decide how best to continue its assistance to Somalia after next March, he continued. It was not anxious to abandon the Somali people. It expected the factions to abandon violence as the means of settling their differences. They must also stick to the agenda agreed to at Addis Ababa and Nairobi, by convening a genuinely inclusively national reconciliation conference which would lead to an interim government. Only then would the international community be willing to give Somalia the support for reconstruction and development it so desperately needed.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali this morning had a working breakfast in Paris with Prime Minister Edouard Balladur, during which he expressed gratitude for French contributions to

peace-keeping operations all over the world. They discussed relations between France and the United Nations, and matters relating to Africa and the former Yugoslavia.

The Secretary-General later left France for his first official visit to Romania. On his arrival in Bucharest, he said he aimed to strengthen relations between the United Nations and Romania, a founder Member of the Organization. Following a meeting with the Chairman of the Chairman of Deputies, Adrian Nastase, he addressed a joint session of the Romanian Parliament.

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The United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) today reported heavy fighting in the Bihac area after a major Bosnian Government offensive. The Government's Fifth Army Corps advanced some 10 kilometres, taking 100 to 150 square kilometres of territory in the process. UNPROFOR described the situation as very fluid, and noted that the Bosnian Serbs might launch a counter-attack.

Meanwhile, there was heavy firing into and out of Sarajevo. Six explosions were reported in the city. One occurred in a playground, injuring six children. Fragments indicated that the explosion had been caused by a 120mm mortar, but there was no indication as to the source of the firing.

Yesterday, a tank belonging to the Danish UNPROFOR contingent was hit by fire from a Bosnian Serb tank. The Danish peace-keepers returned fire and did not sustain any casualties.

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The Secretary-General's Special Adviser for Public Policy, Gillian Martin Sorensen, today appealed to all States to establish committees as soon as possible to prepare for the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. She told the Preparatory Committee for the occasion that while the number of national committees was continuing to grow, more than 80 States still had none. She added that the Preparatory Committee's secretariat was ready and willing to work with them.

The Special Adviser noted that there was considerable public interest in educational programmes on the United Nations. The secretariat would be working through the United Nations

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Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and national education ministries to encourage all schools to teach about the Organization in 1995.

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The Human Rights Committee has been discussing a draft general comment addressing issues raised by a growing tendency to enter reservations to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. General comments are designed to provide guidance to States parties on adherence to the spirit and letter of the Covenant.

According to the draft before the Committee in Geneva, the number, content and scope of reservations might undermine the full implementation of the Covenant; they also tend to weaken the obligations of States parties. Reservations might serve a useful function only when they enable individual States to temporarily adapt the general provisions of the Covenant to their specific situation. Recalling that the number of reservations attached to human rights treaties is significantly higher than the number associated with other types of multilateral treaties, the draft indicates that 46 States parties have entered a total of 150 reservations to the Covenant.

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